

Seattle City Council

**Culture, Civil Rights, Health, and Personnel Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, 2:00 PM, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**Words' Worth**

The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **John Burgess**

Today's poet is **Julene Tripp Weaver**

**Julene Tripp Weaver** works in HIV/AIDS Services in Seattle. She won third prize for poetry from the Unfinished Works Contest sponsored by AIDS Services Foundation Orange County in December 2005. In September 2007 *Finishing Line Press* published her chapbook "Case Walking: An AIDS Case Manager Wails her Blues." A poem from her chapbook was read by Garrison Keillor on The Writer's Almanac.

**Barb and Dori**

by Julene Tripp Weaver

Each holds twenty years of AIDS,  
mother and daughter miracle team.  
Dori leans up to me, says,  
*The most important thing about this party  
is seeing my mother happy.*

Her mother leans up to me says,  
*I want more  
than being just a mother to this 19-year-old.*

Living with AIDS  
giving care to her daughter,  
all she wants is time to herself.

Barb takes full responsibility  
to this child she bore with HIV,  
nurses her back to health  
each time there is sickness.  
She loves her more than anything,  
proudly shows off baby pictures at the party.

Barb tells us how Dori, in frustration,  
cut off her two pony tails,

exclaims, *Isn't she beautiful!*  
This dwarfed girl with jagged hair  
thin as a rail, big breasts  
nineteen years old,  
miracle child.

This pure-love bond of twenty years  
like any mother-daughter team  
only different.

We all love these two women.  
We cheer them on, pray it never ends—  
that Dori will find her own apartment,  
give her mother back her time,  
that each will have a full life  
find the dreams they seek.

Tonight Barb sings a capella, does scat.  
Twenty years into this altered reality.  
Barb and Dori, our pioneers.

### **Dori: Mid-Life**

by Julene Tripp Weaver

*Dedicated to Dorianne Bryon, born July 11, 1983,  
died September 13, 2003*

She crosses to the open door  
the welcome arms  
on the other side.

She is gone now  
only twenty years old  
we mourn our loss.

Does she hold back  
look to her mother,  
too soon to say goodbye?

We must wonder  
at the threshold of Life  
her mid-life only ten.

We must wonder  
as we say goodbye, will she linger

a spirit at her mother's side?

We will count our days  
watch the calendar, wonder  
where our true middle-age lies.

-- *end* --